Indo-Russian trade exhibitions

†1026. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal regarding participation in trade exhibitions between Russia and India is under consideration;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIG VIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) With the view to enhance bilateral trade and investment, both India and Russia actively encourage regular and institutionalized interaction between businesspersons of the two countries. Participation in trade fairs and exhibitions held in each other's country is an important part of this ongoing effort. For example, a large business delegation participated in an exhibition of Indian goods in Moscow in February 2003. A Russian delegation led by the Governor of the Ryazan Region of the Russian Federation visited the India International Trade Fair in November, 2003. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (OH) are closely working with their Russian counterparts in this regard. Indian and Russian delegations also participate regularly in defence related shows and exhibitions in each other's country.

Highway project linking India, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam

1027. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
DR. KARAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Highway Project linking India, Thailand and Myanmar to provide for a road network in ASEAN;

(b) if so, the details of the project and contemplated contribution of respective countries to this project; and

(c) the progress made in this direction, so far?

†Original notice of trie question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) The project involves construction of a highway from Moreh in India to Mae Sot in Thailand through Bagan in Myanmar. Two Task Forces have been set up to look into the technical and financial aspects of this project, which includes the respective contributions of the countries. The next meetings of the Task Forces are scheduled to be held in the third week of December, 2003.

India's role in South and South East Asia

1028. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) with the successful conclusion of the Prime Minister's tour of ASEAN countries and based on the proven experience of growth of economies of these nations through investment by the multinationals, in which areas of economic and technological cooperations, India is taking initiative to strengthen its presence in this region;

(b) whether any concrete proposals have been made and vigorously followed; and

(c) if so, the response from these countries so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) and (b) India is taking concrete steps to strengthen its economic and technological presence in South East Asia through bilateral, sub-regional and regional initiatives, including the trilateral road project with Myanmar and Thailand, signing of a Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation with ASEAN and a Framework Agreement for Free Trade Area with Thailand. Negotiations are on for concluding a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with Singapore.

(c) These countries have warmly welcomed India's initiatives for closer linkages with the region.